

Our tax policy should support the most freedom at the least cost and embody the least intrusive means of levying and collecting taxes. But most importantly of all, Mr. President, we need a policy that does not punish the basic values of work, savings and individual liberty.

Mr. President, without comprehensive tax reform, we will never truly be able to say that the era of big government is over.

Mr. President, I would encourage my colleagues to join me and the Senator from Idaho in supporting this sense-of-the-Senate resolution.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I do want to propound a unanimous consent request here, that would allow us to carry out the indication that we have put at the table here that this would be the last vote of the night.

Before I do that, I want to say again I really appreciate the bipartisan cooperation that we have had throughout this week. I think it has made the Senate look good and it has taken a lot of work and several of us have had to keep our commitments in a way that was not always easy, but we have stuck by it on both sides of the aisle. I thank the Senators for doing that. I appreciate also your tolerance when I suffered mightily on one of the votes myself today.

The chairman and the ranking member have been a pleasure in working through all of this. I thank them and their staff. It is a little premature. I think we are tired, we are trying to find a way to complete our work, but it is important we also take note of the fact that we have been doing some good work working together. We want to keep that going.

So we have a unanimous consent request that we have worked with Senator DASCHLE on. He has made a lot of very positive recommendations. We think this would be the fairest way under the process that we have now to complete our work.

I want to say, Senator DASCHLE and Senator DOMENICI, Senator BYRD and I have been talking about the fact that we need to take a look at the process and see if we cannot come up with a little better way to do it without the votes in seriatim at the end of this process. Senator BYRD has a resolution he is going to introduce. Senator DASCHLE and I are going to appoint a task force of senior Senators to see if we cannot come up with some ideas we can agree to, to allow this process to be done better in the future.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT

Mr. LOTT. But, in view of what we have to deal with, I ask unanimous consent, now, that during the remainder of the consideration tonight of S. 949, the following be the only amendments in order, other than agreed-upon amendments to be offered by the managers: The Nickles amendment, the Gramm amendment, and Kerry of Massachusetts amendment. I further ask at the conclusion of the debate on the

above listed amendments, it be in order for any Member of the Senate to address the Senate with respect to an amendment that may be offered after all time is expired, but there be no further amendments to be in order this evening.

I further ask that at the conclusion of the remainder of the time on S. 949, the Senate automatically proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each. That way, if all time has expired and you have an amendment that you are going to offer tomorrow, you have that 10 minutes in which you can explain tonight what your intentions are, what is in the amendment; so I ask at the conclusion of the remaining time on S. 949 the Senate automatically proceed to this period of morning business.

Mr. BIDEN. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DOMENICI. Reserving the right to object. Mr. Leader, would you clarify for me please, and I regret to take your time, will there be no amendments offered tomorrow that are not offered tonight?

Mr. LOTT. No. Under this agreement, if a Senator has not had the opportunity to offer his amendment today, he or she would be able to offer their amendment in the morning with time equally divided between those for and against it, 2 minutes each—the usual 1 minute on each side to explain that amendment and a vote.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. Leader, they would have 1 minute on a side tomorrow?

Mr. LOTT. Yes. Right.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. Leader, we have worked with everybody that had process amendments. They don't have to offer them, and I am not asking especially for them to offer them, but I wonder if we couldn't get an agreement that would set in motion, so everybody would understand, these process amendments? Could I try a request on for you and see if you can agree?

I ask consent that the withdrawn amendment No. 537, that withdrawal be vitiated—that is the one I offered—and that a motion to waive with respect to amendment 537 be made and that it not be amendable, the motion to waive is agreed to the amendment, and if it is, it be treated as original text. Then I ask consent that the following Senators, if they choose, be authorized to offer amendments for budget process: BIDEN, GRAMM—Senator GRAMM of Texas, Senator BUMPERS, Senator GREGG, Senators BROWNBACK, FRIST, and ABRAHAM. And if they offer them they would be taken up in that order tomorrow.

Mr. LOTT. These are the amendments having to do strictly with process questions. I know there is a lot of interest in these process amendments. I am not familiar with the content of all of them.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

Mr. LOTT. Our understanding is Senator BYRD is going to offer his separately.

Mr. President, I renew my request based on the three-unanimous consent request paragraphs I read, with the addition of the Domenici request.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I direct the question to both leaders. I have some trouble understanding why there would be amendments in order in the morning. It would seem to me this process has gone on for several days and there should come a time when you make a decision whether you are going to offer an amendment. The leaders have been very generous, they are going to allow amendments to be offered after the time has expired. But I would think that should end sometime tonight. I don't think we should come in here in the morning, fresh as daisies, with a big pile of new amendments.

Mr. LOTT. The Senator's point is well taken and I certainly agree. Senator DASCHLE and I would hope there would not be a long series of amendments offered tomorrow.

Some Senators will feel very strongly and feel like they should have that opportunity. Under the rules as they now exist we could not cut them off. We have had a good debate. We have had the alternative amendment offered by the Democratic leader. We have had other good amendments and debates that occurred. We hope we could bring it to a conclusion at a reasonable time tomorrow.

I remind my colleagues we had 16 votes yesterday, I believe it was. We started at 9:30 and we finally concluded that at about 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Now I believe we can do a better job. We'll start earlier tomorrow and we will stick to the 10-minute vote after the first vote. And we will try to move it right along. But we found the other night that when we said OK, just leave your amendment with the managers of the bill, when we came in in the morning we had 61 amendments. Then the leadership, Senator DASCHLE and his whip team, as we were, were running around trying to find out which amendments really—what they do. You know, will the Senator insist on offering it? Can we get them accepted? It really complicated the process.

We really believe by this process Senators will be able to debate these amendments and other amendments tonight. Then they, based on their thinking tomorrow, they would have the opportunity or perhaps would choose not to offer the amendments tomorrow. But if they do we cannot—we cannot cut off the Senators' right to offer an amendment.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, continuing my reservation, I say